



Please Stand By

CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM

We Will Begin Shortly...

You can watch the live camera stream instead of using WebEx (do not use both) by visiting:

<http://blog.osi.ca.gov/live/>

Content is available to download on the CCR webpage:

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CDSS-Programs/Continuum-of-Care-Reform/Family-Finding>



CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM

Empower, Engage, Support

Family Finding – Building Connections for our Youth

Bob Friend, Denise Goodman, Jane Gonzalez, and Kim Myers

April 13, 2018

California Department of Social Services

Time: 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm

Welcome and Introduction

By Greg Rose

Deputy Director of Children and Family Services, CDSS



Our Panelists

- Bob Friend
- Denise Goodman
- Jane Gonzalez, Los Angeles County
- Kim Myers, Shasta County



California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP)

Children in Foster Care

California Child Welfare Indicators Project (CCWIP)
University of California at Berkeley
Children in Foster Care
Agency Type=All Types
January 1, 2018



19,617

Relative/NRFM



7,464

Foster



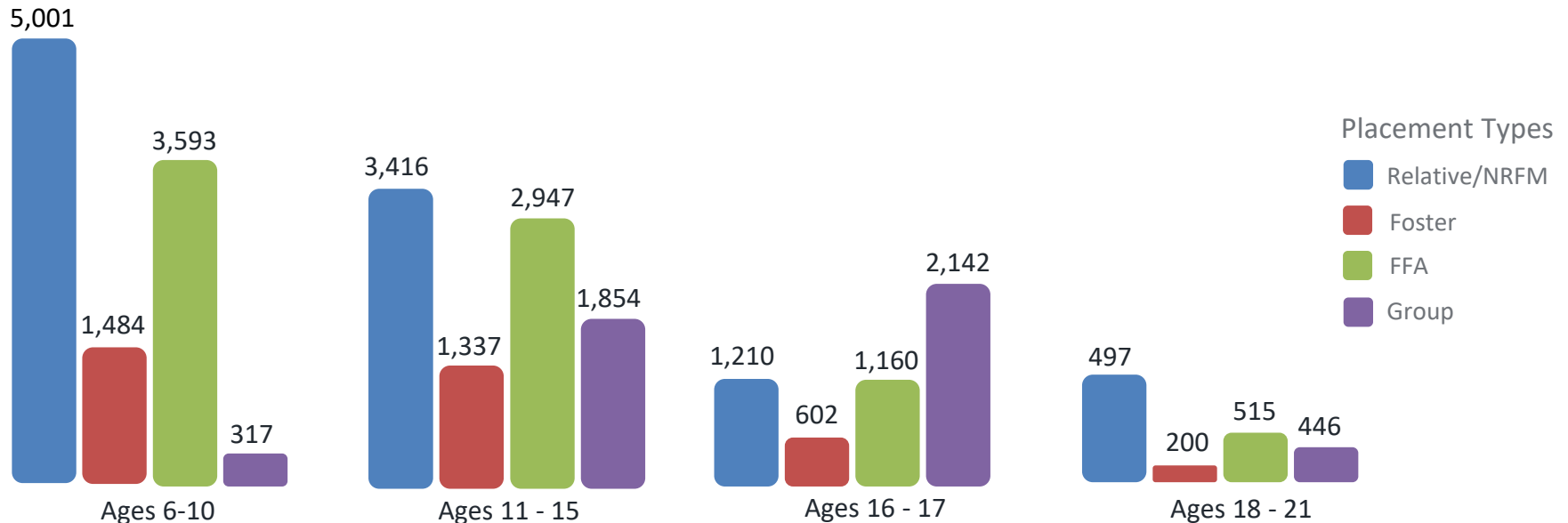
14,133

FFA



4,793

Group



Today's Presentation

- Front-end Family Finding
- Youth who have experienced complex trauma
- County best practices



Family Finding at the Front End

BOB FRIEND

DIRECTOR, NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR PERMANENT FAMILY
CONNECTEDNESS, SENECA FAMILY OF AGENCIES

7

Why is Family Finding an essential core practice?

- It's the law—Family Finding can assist in meeting numerous legal mandates
- Based on mounds of research, while attending to current and historical social injustices
 - It provides the opportunity to build/sustain networks, promoting family resilience to ensure permanency and well-being beyond government intervention. It provides the most powerful ingredients for healing-connections to people who children and youth love and belong to.
 - It promotes the opportunity for children, youth, parents, family and connections to participate in and guide the planning and decision making processes; asserts that kin are the experts in solving their own problems. Families can be considered, invested in, and treated as **assets**.
 - Prevents or intercedes in toxic isolation and loneliness children and youth in child welfare can suffer from that further traumatizes them.
- It provides the opportunity for the workforce to act in practices that align with their values and led them to practice in the field to begin with—to restore workers' hopes

Front-End Legal Requirements

Reasonable Efforts

- Prevent removal, Return Home

Family Finding

- 5th degree Relatives
- Important Connections

Paternity

- Inquiry, Determination, Involve

ICWA

- Inquiry, Notice and Involvement

Relative Placement

- Kinship/NREFM

Siblings

- Placement or Connection

Family Reunification

- Reasonable efforts to Return Home

Visitation

- What is reasonable?

Concurrent Planning

What Was Done Prior to Removal?

- What services were considered and offered to allow child to remain in home? Were these services rationally related to the safety threat?
- Have non-custodial parents, paternal and maternal relatives been identified and explored? What is the plan to do so?
- Not just “services.” What supports are available for the youth and family so that youth can remain in home or stay with family?

Gatowski, S., Miller, N., Rubin, S., Escher, P., & Maze, C. (2016) Enhanced resource guidelines: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Reasonable Efforts to Prevent Removal

- Prior to the placement of a child in foster care, State must make reasonable efforts to:
 - Maintain the family unit and
 - Prevent or eliminate the unnecessary removal of a child from his/her home, as long as the child's safety is assured;
 - Effect the safe reunification of the child and family (if temporary out-of-home placement is necessary to ensure the immediate safety of the child) and
 - Make and finalize alternative permanency plans in a timely manner when reunification is not appropriate or possible.

[45 C.F.R. §1356.21(b)(1); 42 U.S.C. §671(a)(15)]

What Can be Arranged so Child Can Safely Return Home Today?

- Reasonable Efforts

- What is preventing the child from returning home today?
- What is current safety threat?
- Safety plan?

- Services

- Rationally related to specific safety threat?
- How are the parents, extended family and children being engaged?
- Do services, interventions and support meet current needs and build upon strengths of the family?

Gatowski, S., Miller, N., Rubin, S., Escher, P., & Maze, C. (2016) Enhanced resource guidelines: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Family Finding Requirements-California

[W & I 309(e)(1); 628(d); California Rules of Court
5.637(a)(b)]

- If the child is removed or is at risk of entering foster care the social worker or probation officer shall within 30 days, use due diligence to:
 - Conduct an investigation to identify, locate and notify all adult relatives.(subject to DV exception)
 - Adult Relatives includes: adult who is related to the child by blood, adoption or affinity within the fifth degree of kinship...
 - An extended family member as defined by the law or custom of an Indian child's tribe. (25 U.S.C. § 1903(2).)

Supportive Families Act

- Encouraging the placement of children in foster care with siblings [PL-113-183]
 - Notice under FC – Notice to the following relatives:
 - Adult grandparents
 - All parents of a sibling of the child, where such parent has legal custody of such sibling
 - Includes: person would have been considered a sibling but for a termination or death of a parent.

Federal Law on Relative Placement

- State SHALL consider giving preference to an adult relative over a non-related caregiver when determining a placement for a child
- Provided that the relative caregiver meets all relevant State child protection standards.

42 U.S.C. § 671(a)(19)

Least Restrictive and Most Family-Like Placements

- Consider kin as first resort
 - Relative placement can be the best opportunity for maintaining familial, cultural and community ties;
 - Reducing overall trauma of removal and placement
 - Allows for more normalcy, more natural family time/visitation (relative can supervise)
 - Children placed with kin experience fewer placement disruptions
 - If disruption occurs, children are more likely to be transferred to care of another relative

Gatowski, S., Miller, N., Rubin, S., Escher, P., & Maze, C. (2016) Enhanced resource guidelines: Improving court practice in child abuse and neglect cases. Reno, NV: National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

Relative/NREFM Placement

[W & I 3 6 1 . 2 (a) (e)]

- When the court orders removal, the court shall:
 - Order the care, custody, control of the child to be under the supervision of the social worker who may place the child in any of the following:
 - The home of a noncustodial parent as described in subdivision (a), regardless of the parent's immigration status.
 - The approved home of a relative, regardless of the relative's immigration status.
 - The approved home of a non-relative extended family member

CA – AB 403 – Child and Family Team Meetings

- Group of individuals that includes:
 - Child or youth
 - Family members
 - Professional
 - Natural community supports
 - Other individuals identified by family who are invested in the child, youth and family's success
- Composition of the team is driven by family members' preferences
 - Natural supportive relationships with family so that family's support system will continue to exist after formal services are completed
- CFT role:
 - Include family members in defining and reaching identified goals for child
 - Team works together to identify each family member's strengths and needs

Key Research Findings

Isolation & Lack of Social Networks

- Poor self esteem resulting in making unwise/potentially harmful choices about their bodies
- Long-term dysfunction socially and physically
- Impaired development of protective factors to improve functioning and resilience when meeting adversity
- Facilitates the development and severity of childhood trauma associated with pathophysiology (e.g. hypertension leading to coronary artery disease)

Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee (2015). Supporting Healthy Sexual Development of Youth in Foster Care. California Child Welfare Council.

Bruskas, D. (2010). "Developmental Health of Infants and Children Subsequent to Foster Care." Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 23(4), 231-241.

California Department of Social Services. California Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Medication with Children and Youth in Foster Care.

Norman, G., Hawkey, L., Ball, A., Berntson, G., & Cacioppo, J. (2013). Perceived Social Isolation Moderates the Relationship between Early Childhood Trauma and Pulse Pressure in Older Adults. International Journal of Psychophysiology, 88, 334-38.

Social Networks and Isolation Cont'd

- Higher levels of loneliness are associated with:
- Dissatisfaction with living circumstances
- Chronic social stress
- Family conflict
- Poor quality social relationships
- “A person made to feel lonely not only feels unhappy but also feels unsafe, feelings that activate an anachronistic survival mechanism that heightens sensitivity to threats from all sides.”

Cacioppo, J., & Cacioppo, S. (2014). Social Relationships and Health: The Toxic Effects of Perceived Social Isolation. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 8(2), 58-72.

Grief and Loss – What the research shows

Ambiguous loss, where losses are not “clear-cut and final” results in:

- Unresolved grief, including outrage and inability to move on
- Confusion, distress and ambivalence
- Blocked coping processes
- Experience of helplessness, and therefore depression, anxiety and relationship conflicts.
- Rigidity of family roles, confusion in boundaries

Lee, R., & Whiting, J. (2007). Foster Children's Expressions of Ambiguous Loss. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 35(5), 417-428.

Research Also Shows

- Post traumatic stress rate ***double*** that of war veterans
- Serious untreated health conditions
- Lower high school graduation and college completion rates
- Less likely to be employed
- Unintended pregnancy
- Poverty level incomes
- Higher rate of becoming victims of crime, or engaging in criminal activity

Pecora, Peter J., Ronald C. Kessler, Kirk Obrien, Catherine Roller White, Jason Williams, Eva Hiripi, Diana English, James White, and Mary Anne Herrick. "Educational and employment outcomes of adults formerly placed in foster care: Results from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study." *Children and Youth Services Review* 28.12 (2006): 1459-481. Web.

Resistance? Or Protest??



Remember

- Youth are dealing with normal rebellious behavior (older teens)
- Youth have built up shields of protection
- Unsure how to “have” a forever family
- They know how to “blow out” of placements
- They might have ODD
(**Oppression** Defiant Disorder)!
- They WILL have big feelings

DON'T GIVE UP!



What Does Permanency Mean for This Youth?



25

What Practices & Approaches Can Improve Outcomes?

- Collaborative practice which includes and involves “family” in decision making and determination of planning for kin
- Voice of young people present and apparent in problem-solving and decision making
- Most common factor in evidence based practices is the quality of relationship between the helper and those being served
- Active skill building, coaching and training that focuses on the development of adults is effective and essential to promote healthy child development

<http://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Networks Matter

- Young people generally have better outcomes with their kin than without them
- Healthy development exists within an environment of relationships that begins in the family and extends out to include other adults
- What children need are their *entire* environment of relationships to be invested in their healthy development

<http://developingchild.harvard.edu/>

Social Capital

Youth who have access to large stores of family or school social capital can be taught norms about appropriate behavior that define or discourage delinquency; in addition they may feel obligations to the family, their teachers, or their schools that also inhibit delinquency.”

Dufur, M., Hoffmann, J., Braudt, D., Parcel, T., & Spence, K. (2015). Examining the Effects of Family and School Social Capital on Delinquent Behavior. *Deviant Behavior*, 36(7), 511-526

Family Connections

“Re-establishing family connections for teens before they exit out of care, no matter what age they are, is the strongest and most positive youth development program the child welfare system can offer...”

*Avery, Rosemary, Examination of theory and promising practice for achieving permanency for teens before they age out of foster care, 2010



Family Finding Aligns with and Supports Child and Family Teams, and CCR Implementation

30

Child and Family Team - Values

- Child and Family Team process reflects a belief that:
 - Families have capacity to address their problems and achieve success if given the opportunity and supports
 - Engagement with families is fundamental
 - Working with children, youth and families as partners results in plans that are developed collaboratively and in a shared decision-making process
 - Family members hold significant power of choice when strategies are defined
 - Process reflects the culture and preferences of children, youth and families, building on their unique values and capacities
 - Everyone on the team has a voice

ACL 16-84 – California Health and Human Services Agency

Continuum of Care Reform

Improving outcomes for young people in care by:

- Reducing the use and length of stay in congregate care
- Increasing the use of home-based family care, with individualized services which can be accessed regardless of placement type
- Decreasing the length of time to attain permanence and ensure all young people live with committed, permanent and nurturing family with strong community connections
- Increasing the accountability and transparency for all services and insisting on continuous quality improvements

Continuum of Care Reform

Key Components:

- Strengthen cross-agency service/support delivery through use of child and family teams as the group responsible for driving case planning, placement decisions and care coordination
- Ensure providers have the ability to meet core services and supports, including mental health needs
- Increase collaboration between providers, child welfare, probation, behavioral/mental health and education to provide integrated services

The Family Finding Model Strives to:

- Relentlessly locate and notify anyone related or connected to the child/youth via effective practices & tools in accordance with state and federal legislation and mandates.
- Engages identified “family” to stay connected to youth in care to combat the “unintended social quarantine” often experienced by children/youth in the child welfare system.
- Actively welcomes and involves family who can productively contribute via a prescribed process to plan for how the child/youth can safely achieve permanence and exit the child welfare system.
- Promotes the “natural support network” to develop a plan that identifies the role of team members, potential challenges to safety and well-being, and strategies to attend to those challenges to ensure safety, permanency and well-being.

What gets in the way?

- Lack of alignment on both the individual service level as well as across systems—almost universally, when the work is not progressing, there is unresolved conflict on the team about the purpose, scope and direction of the work. Often, placement is the focus of the intervention, rather than well-being, healing, love and relationships. When systems (Social Services, Behavioral Health, Legal, Advocacy, Community partners, local government etc.) are not working together, parents, children and families face frequent and massive barriers and gaps to successfully traverse the bureaucracy.
- Lack of oversight or enforcement—our systems have been operating under the premise that the child welfare system’s purpose is to protect children from harming family members, and that the system provides them with a safe haven to be raised. Daily practice, supervision, management and partner behavior is based on these incomplete and often inaccurate premises, which drives dozens or hundreds of small and large decisions every day that marginalize youth and family voice/participation.

Thank you

Bob Friend

Director, national institute for Permanent family connectedness,
Seneca Family of agencies

Family Finding Webcast



Denise Goodman, PhD
April 13, 2018

Why Use Family Finding?

- other strategies too broad for specific child
- takes into consideration child's strengths/needs
- utilizes child's resources and relationships
- increases likelihood of success - customized for specific child
- increases child's participation in/commitment to permanency process
- may inspire child's resource parents to commit to permanency!!!



WHY KIDS SAY "NO" TO A FAMILY:

Rejection

Abandonment

Loss of Siblings

Starting over

Loss of friends

Fear of the unknown

LOYALTY CONFLICTS

Moving...again

Family Search and Engagement

Step 1: Setting the Stage

Step 2: Discovery





**Get to
KNOW
the
YOUTH!!!**

Opportunities 4 Family Search

- ☐ Child and Family Team meetings (CFT)
- ☐ Permanency Round Tables (PRT)
- ☐ Case Conferences/Reviews
- ☐ Court Hearings



Your Partners include:

- Child/youth
- Biological parents
- Resource Parents
- Many Others

**CONDUCT AN
ARCHEOLOGICAL DIG
in the YOUTH'S FILE!!**



Record Review Tool



Family Search and Engagement

Step 1: Setting the Stage

Step 2: Discovery

Step 3: Engagement

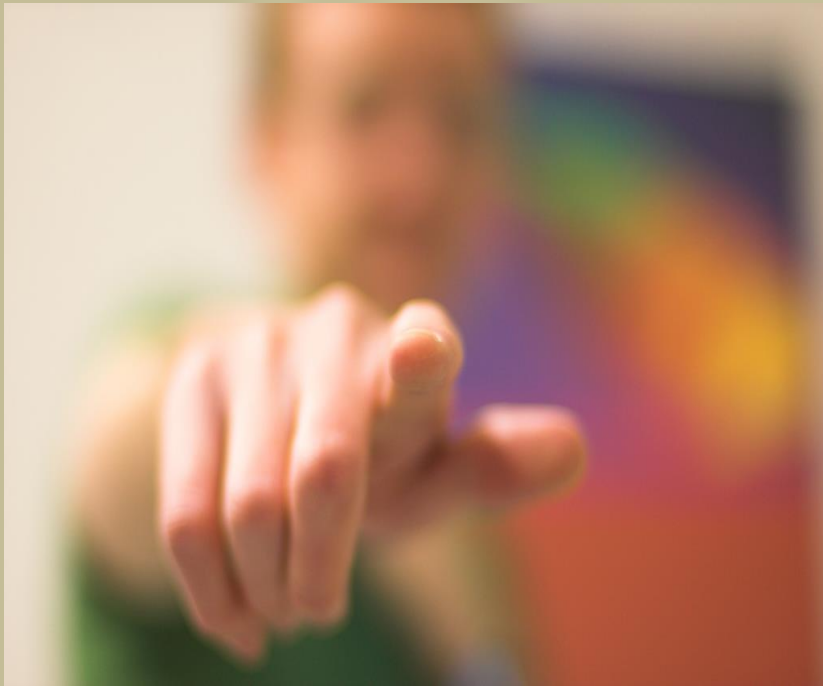
Step 4: Exploration and Planning

Step 5: Decision-making and Evaluation

Step 6: Sustaining the Relationship(s)



YOU ARE THE DIFFERENCE!



Your attitude
Your motivation
Your creativity
Your energy
Your perseverance

Thank You

Denise Goodman, PhD

Jane Gonzalez
Los Angeles County
Department of Children and Family Services
Permanency Partners Program (P3)



Origins of P3

- Oct 2004- Utilizing retired social workers, who could focus exclusively on finding permanency for youth (aged 12-18) who had been in foster care for an extended period of time and had little to no family connections, the P3 pilot program began in one (1) office with 50 youth identified to participate.
- April 2005- The P3 program expanded to eight (8) offices with full county-wide expansion in 2006.



Origins of P3 (con't)

- 2012- After an internal pilot proved successful, P3 CSWs began to provide services to “upfront” cases in which family finding was initiated for children who were newly detained.
- May 2016- The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors requested that P3 implement a protocol to provide family finding efforts to children as close to the time of detention as possible.



Origins of P3 (con't)

- Oct 2016- Under the guidance of the Office of Child Protection and in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Probation an Upfront Family Finding Pilot (UFFP) program was initiated in two (2) offices.
- Jan 2018- The UFFP program expanded to an additional two (2) offices with a plan to roll out to the remaining DCFS offices.



Importance of P3

- Children and family want and deserve permanency and connections
- It's the law- relatives have a right to know that a child has entered our care
- It aids in the inclusion of those which have been traditionally overlooked (fathers, extended relatives- both paternal and maternal, NREFMs)
- Highlights the importance of building a partnership (with families and staff) when conducting family finding



How do we locate family/NREFMs

- Collaboration with case carrying CSWs
- Case mining (review of CWS/CMS and hard file)
- Interviewing parents/child
- Utilizing search databases- CLEAR, SENECA, LRS
- Social media



How Family Members Can Be Involved in a Child's Life



Thank You

Jane Gonzalez
Los Angeles County
Department of Children and Family Services
Permanency Partners Program (P3)



SHASTA COUNTY
Health & Human Service Agency
Children's Services Branch



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality caregiving 

Kim Myers
Family Finding

Current Family Finding Staff

One full-time Family Finder

One part-time Family Finder Intern in Intake

One part-time Family Finder Intern in Ongoing – Intensive Search

Two full-time Family Finders contracted with outside agency to do intensive search and engagement for youth currently in Group Home/STRTP placements



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

When children/youth come into care:

Family Finding Unit is notified when a Petition is filed

A paper file is created with staffing notes where all information will be stored throughout the life of the case

The Family Finder begins review of the file

- Review of existing family connections
- Review of Court Reports
- Review of contacts



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

When children/youth come into care:

Creation of maternal and paternal genogram for each family

Review of genogram with parents to clarify family connections, when needed

Written notification to relatives using Relative Notification Letter that is generated from CWS/CMS



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

Results of Family Finding

	Requests/ Petitions	Total Children	Completed # of Searches	# Relatives found	Associated Children	Letters Sent
FY16-17	130	167	85	1910	112	1270
FY17-18	110	140	86	1664	109	1194
Total	240	307	171	3574	221	2464



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

RFA & Family Search and Engagement

Family Finder enters the relative/NREFM information into the collateral contact section of CWS/CMS

Family Finder notifies assigned Social Worker when a relative or NREFM picks up a RFA application

RFA Training Staff provide education and support to relatives who are in the RFA assessment process

RFA Duty Worker available every day to receive RFA applications, paperwork, answer questions, assist with application completion



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

Family Finding Kaizen

Facilitated group process that reviewed family finding activities throughout the entire agency from the first call in Intake to Permanency

Discovered that the current family finding process is not unified and contains duplicated activities

Redundant forms asking for the same information at multiple points in the life of the case

Inconsistent relative search practices

Need for staff training to unify relative documentation in CMS



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 

ICWA Efforts in RFA and Family Finding

Good working relationship with local Native American Tribes

Have added Tribal requested elements to the RFA written assessment so Tribal Courts have information needed for Tribal Customary Adoption



RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality Caregiving 



Thank You

SHASTA COUNTY
Health & Human Service Agency
Children's Services Branch

RESOURCE FAMILIES

Support  Teaming  Quality caregiving 

Questions and Discussion



Thank you for your participation!

Be sure to visit the CCR webpage to download resources related to this presentation. A video of this webcast will be uploaded here shortly so you can share with others. On our page, don't forget to subscribe to receive our newsletter and all the latest news, updates and future events from CCR!

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/CDSS-Programs/Continuum-of-Care-Reform/Family-Finding>

